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THE INFLUENCE OF SELF-IMAGE CONGRUITY ON
PERCEIVED VALUE AND BRAND LOYALTY CONCERNING SPORTSWEAR

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

in

The Department of Textiles,
Apparel Design and Merchandising

by
Jane Andayi Opiri
B. ED, Kenyatta University, 1995
May 2015

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ABSTRACT

Perceived value is important in determining brand loyalty. Although studies have shown that consumers' perceived values change over time, understanding which values are influenced by self-image congruity is necessary, because the relationship consumers form with brands they favor will help marketers develop strategies that can motivate their brand loyalty. Therefore, this study sought to assess which perceived values consumers acquire from consumption of their favorite sportswear brand. It also examined the influence of self-image congruity on these values.

The objectives of the study were to: identify the perceived value of sportswear brands of college students; investigate the effect of perceived value on brand loyalty; test the mediating effect of the self-concept in the relationship between perceived value and brand loyalty; and identify the relationship among perceived value, self-concept and brand loyalty. An online survey was administered to college students. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The results showed that participants were loyal to their favorite sportswear brands given key values.

The study identified two clusters of participants based on their self-image congruity, those with high self-image congruency and those with low self-image congruency. High self-image congruency group considered price and quality value in their favorite sportswear brand. Thus, their brand loyalty was mainly as a result of the price and quality value they got from the brand. The low self-image congruency group considered emotional and price value in their favorite brand. Thus their brand loyalty was mainly due to the emotional value and price value they got from their favorite brand. None of the groups were influenced by social value.

Therefore, since the ‘self’ influences consumption, focusing on marketing strategies that enhance self-image congruity for each of the groups could help companies sustain brand loyalty among their customers given the competitiveness in this retail sector.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Consumers are influenced by various factors in their choice of products and services. These factors include the values consumers assign to products. Value is the consumers' overall judgment of a given product or service (Zeithaml, 1988). Recent studies have shown that analyzing perceived value may help manufacturers understand and even predict consumer behavior (Gallarza & Gil Saura, 2006). Prediction of consumer buying behavior can help brand managers gain a competitive advantage over other rival companies. This can result in high quality products that will most likely increase market share, build consumer brand loyalty, and create a sustainable competitive advantage for the firm (Slater, 1997).

Since value is what the consumer gains from consuming the product in exchange for their monetary and non-monetary sacrifices (Zeithaml, 1988), consumers will thus seek out and use goods and services they perceive as having value to them (Sánchez-Fernández, & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). The consumer's perception of value will occur at both the pre-purchase and purchase stage (Woodruff, 1997), and, thus, will influence their decision making process. At pre-purchase, the consumer evaluates whether the product meets their needs by searching their internal and external knowledge sources about the product (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995). For instance, using an apparel example, the consumer will consider factors such as color, fit, fabric and quality of an apparel item before deciding to purchase it. At post purchase, the consumer evaluates whether their needs were met and if they were satisfied.

Satisfaction may lead to continuous consumption of a product. During this time, consumers will attach specific and symbolic meaning to the products that meet their needs (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998). Most times, the consumer will seek similarities between themselves and the characteristics of the brands they love (Sirgy, 1982). Consumers will, therefore buy and use

products that enhance their self-image, and they will eventually form special attachments and develop relationships with these products (Fournier, 1998). These special attachments are usually integrated into their self-concept.

The self-concept is the total sum of an individual's qualities and attributes as perceived by themselves (Solomon, 2013). Most studies operationalize self-concept as the actual and the ideal self of a person (Kressman et al., 2006; Kwak & Kang, 2009; Sirgy et al., 1997). Moreover, the self-concept encompasses the actual and ideal goals, ideals and motives of the consumer. Usually a consumer's attitudes and beliefs embedded in their self-concept is subjective, and influences their perception about the value they get from a product. Thus, consumers will develop their own perceived value about a product as a result of their self-concept. If the consumption of the product satisfies the self-concept, the consumer will be loyal to it. Consumers also become loyal to products that provide them with high value (Yang & Peterson, 2004).

A number of studies have been done on perceived value and brand loyalty of sportswear brands, but this study will integrate the role of the self-concept and brand loyalty perception of sportswear brands. Research has shown that the sportswear market is highly fragmented with high opportunities for new entrants. These new entrants are more likely to capitalize on new technology thus stirring up the market (Euromonitor International, 2014). Hence, there is a need for firms to remain on top by being creative and innovative, and by assessing the continuous and ever changing values of consumers. When these values are a reflective of the self-concept, then the firms are likely to create a sustainable market. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the value that consumers gain in their consumption of sportswear brands.

This study also investigates the relationship among the perceived value, the self-concept and brand loyalty of college students, with particular focus on the moderating role of the self-

concept. It is predicted that the self-concept of an individual will influence their perceived value, which, in turn, will affect brand loyalty. Understanding the relationship between consumers' perceived value about sportswear brands and their self-concept is essential because it affects consumer satisfaction, which then influences consumer loyalty. Knowing what values appeal to consumers will enable companies to develop strategic ways of enhancing their product quality.

1.1 Background

Perceived value, brand loyalty and the self-concept constructs are briefly discussed in the background as these are the key concepts that will be assessed within this research study.

1.1.1 Perceived Value

Several authors have defined perceived value (Holbrook, 1999; Woodruff, 1997; Zeithaml, 1988), but Gallarza and Gil Saura (2006) propose that Zeithaml's (1988) definition is the most universally accepted definition. Zeithaml defines perceived value as "... the consumers overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perception of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). From this context, consumers view perceived value as an exchange between benefits they get from the product and the sacrifices they have to give in terms of money and time (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991). Sometimes, however, consumers may not get all these benefits in their consumption of a given product (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). Consequently, firms can identify and maximize the perceived values of their customers by incorporating these values into their products and services as much as possible. An addition of values can increase purchase behavior, reduce the effects of switching costs and lead to brand loyalty (Vieira, 2013; Yang & Peterson, 2004).

Sheth et al., (1991) identified five dimensions of values: (1) *functional value*, (2) *emotional value*, (3) *social value*, (4) *conditional value* and (5) *epistemic value*. They referred to

them as the theory of consumer choice values. Consumers thus, do not identify with all the values, but identify with values that are of critical relevance to them. Sheth et al. (1991) also argued that these consumption values differ for each individual consumer. One consumer may prefer more functional values and less social values, while another may consider more social values and less emotional values in their choice of a product. When the product has values that meet their needs, a consumer will develop a special attachment and relationship with it. Usually this relationship has symbolic meaning to the consumer. This theory of consumer choice values can be used to understand consumer consumption behavior (Sheth et al., 1991). Figure 1.1 shows the values influencing consumer choices.

Sweeney and Soutar (2001) basing their study on Sheth et al.'s (1991) work, found that consumers evaluated products in terms of factors such as utility, value for money, ability to enjoy and have fun, and the ability of the product to give an impression to others about them. Unlike Sheth et al. (1991), however, their study elicited four categories of values, namely functional value as quality, functional value as price, emotional value, and social value. From their research findings they developed the PERVAL scale which measures the consumer's perceptions of the value of products and brands. This scale helps to assess how values influence consumers' buying attitude and behaviors. These values may lead to consumer satisfaction and influence brand loyalty (Park & Lee, 2005). The next section will discuss the brand loyalty construct.

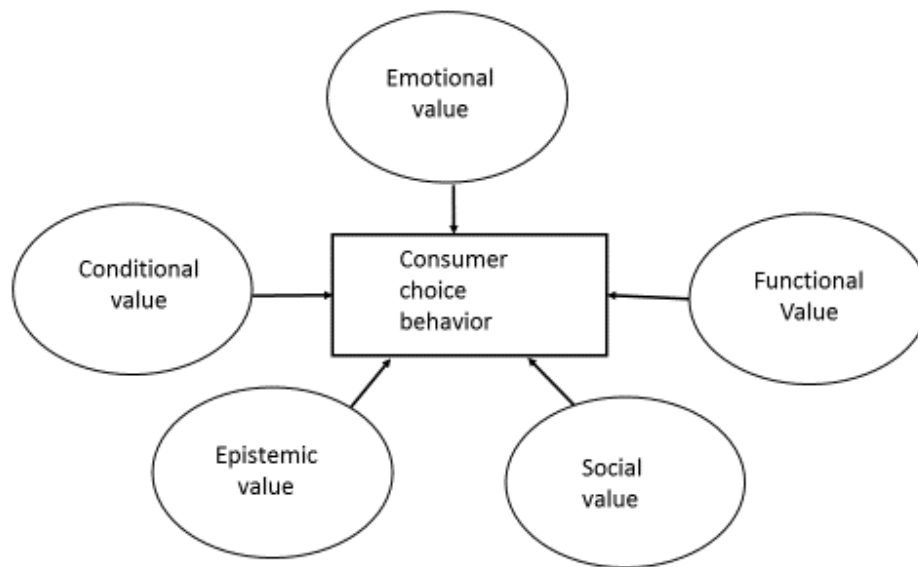


Figure 1.1 The values influencing consumer choices. Adapted from: Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I., & Gross, B. L. (1991, 159-170).

1.1.2 Brand Loyalty

When consumers get what they want in a product and service, they are satisfied.

Consumers then express their satisfaction with a product through brand loyalty. Brand loyalty can be seen as the tendency of a consumer to select a single brand among many similar product brands and continually buy it several times (Aaker, 1991). Studies have identified two types of brand loyalty, as attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Zeithaml, 2000). Attitudinal loyalty involves consumers developing a sense of attachment to a product, while behavioral attachment is seen when consumers have high involvement with a brand through repeated purchasing and willingness to recommend to others (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Liu, Li, Mizerski, & Soh, 2012).

When consumers get what they want in a product they are likely to become loyal to the brand, by buying it several times. A consumer's use and attachment to the product or service is an

indication of satisfaction. Satisfied consumers are thus more likely to be loyal to a brand and develop love for it to a degree that they will not switch to any other brand (Oliver, 1999).

With regards to sportswear specifically, consumers use sportswear products for both casual and sporting events (Cotton Incorporated, 2012). This factor may have led to increased sportswear consumption among young people. College students are likely to favor sportswear brands because of the value they get from them. This value may account for satisfaction and brand loyalty (Park and Lee, 2005). Since consumers form relationships with brands they love (Fournier, 1998) leading to brand loyalty and satisfaction, these relationships are likely to stem from the individual's self-concept. The next section will discuss the self-concept construct.

1.1.3 Self-Concept

Rogers's (1951) self-theory as cited in Sirgy (1982) states that individuals engage in behaviors that will either maintain or enhance their self-concept. Self-concept is the total sum of an individual's self-perceived qualities and attributes (Solomon, 2013). Thus, a consumer will buy a product that has characteristics similar to their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Studies have shown that individuals often look for similarities between their perceived selves and the characteristics of brands they are attracted to (Belk, 1988; Aaker, 1996). In turn, consumers will purchase brands they love, and believe that these brands will improve their self-image, self-esteem and self-worth (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Consumers use products that are similar to different images of the self. The images of the self are encompassed in the self-concept and they include multiple selves - the ideal self, real self, and social self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The self-concept guides the self-congruity - the matching of the brand user image with the consumer self-concept. In consumer literature, the self-congruity is sometimes referred to as the self-image congruence, self-congruence, self-

congruity and image congruence (Kressman et al., 2006). When consumers use products similar to their ideal self, it helps them to satisfy their self-esteem. Consumption of a product similar to the actual self or the real self helps to protect the consumer's identity, while consumption of a product identical to the social self-image makes the consumer to feel a sense of belonging to his peers (Sirgy, 1982). For example, a consumer seeking a social self-image will buy a product similar to that of his or her peers. Use of this product will make the consumer to feel a sense of belonging to her peers, thus satisfying the social self-image. In this study the self-concept has been operationalized to mean the self-image congruity.

As time goes by, consumers tend to develop a deeper and meaningful emotional relationship with the brand (Fournier, 1998). The relationship becomes special and meaningful to them. For example, young people will use clothes symbolically to enhance their self-concept and communicate this to others (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). Consumers also use clothing brands to show who they are, to represent something they admire, or connect to the past (Schembri, Merrilees & Kristansen, 2010). Clothing consumption is therefore, highly influenced by the self-concept. Sportswear consumption among these consumer groups is likely to be more symbolic and related to the self.

1.2 Research Questions and Objectives

Sportswear companies attract customers by creating value in their brands. Assessing college student's perceived value of sportswear brands may help companies to understand the implication of the values they create. Because college students are young, their consumption of sportswear brands may be more symbolic and influenced by their self-concept. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to identify the values college students derive from their consumption of sportswear brands. It seeks to answer two main questions, (1) what is the perceived value of

sportswear brands among college students? And (2) what is the relationship between the college students' self-concept, perceived value and brand loyalty? The objectives of the study are to:

- a) Identify the perceived value of sportswear brands of college students,
- b) Investigate the effect of the perceived value on brand loyalty,
- c) Test the moderating effect of the self-concept in the relationship between perceived value and brand loyalty, and
- d) Identify the relationship among perceived value, self-concept and brand loyalty of college students.

1.3 The Methodological Framework

The study population was composed of college students from one university in the Southeastern US. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire contained variables of perceived value, brand loyalty and self-concept (self-image congruity). To address the objectives of this study, several scales were used. Items from Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) PERVAL Scale were used to measure some aspects of perceived value. Other items were also adapted from Ko et al., (2012). This scale was appropriate for this study because consumers assess products from various dimensions such as: performance, value for money, enjoyment, and social communication with others (Holbrook, 1999; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

The brand loyalty scale items were adapted from Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) and Pappu, Quester & Cooksey (2005). The Self-Image Congruity scale used to measure the Self-concept had items adapted from Sirgy et al. (1997) and Sontag and Lee (2004). These scales measured self-image congruity. Demographic data collected included: age, sex, race, year of study, major, ethnicity and income level. Data was analyzed using multiple regression.

1.4 Scope and Significance of the Study

Perceived value is of great importance to consumers because it influences their satisfaction, which then affects brand loyalty. By ensuring that their brands are of good quality, manufacturers need to incorporate the values consumers consider to be important to them into their products. Firms must first understand the consumer needs. These needs can be met by provision of high quality products, which will result in customer satisfaction. Brand loyalty is pegged to consumer satisfaction and consumers are satisfied when the product they consume meets their needs. If a product meets a need, then, the value the consumer wanted from the product has been met.

Due to competition created by new entrants in the sportswear industry such as the athleisure wear, Lululemon Athletica, and Under Armour (Euromonitor International, 2014), meeting the needs of the already existing consumers will enable firms to maintain their brand loyal clientele. Thus, consumer needs can be met by providing products that have values that enhance and inspire their self-concept - the ideal and the actual self. The provision of values can then lead to consumer satisfaction and influence brand loyalty.

Since college students are known to be brand loyal and to consider value in their choice of products (Nobel, Haytko & Philip, 2009), incorporating the values they want in the brands they love will create a sustainable brand loyal market. Past research has also shown that young people consume products for symbolic meaning (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004; Schembri, Merrilees, & Kristiansen, 2010) and thus studying how the 'self' influences perceived value and brand loyalty will be significant. This study will add to literature by identifying the perceived values that have symbolic meaning to college students in particular, in their consumption of sportswear.

Most studies on perceived value have focused on two dimensions of perceived value - these are functional value as quality and functional value as price dimensions. The present study

will highlight four dimensions of perceived value: the social value, emotional value, functional value price and functional value quality. It contributes to literature by investigating the relationship among all the four dimensions of perceived value, the self-concept and brand loyalty. Because perceived value is a continuous process that needs to be assessed to enhance consumer retailer relationship (Chi & Kilduff, 2011), this literature will help brands and firms to keep up to date with future consumer trends.

Previous studies have mainly focused on brand loyalty and customer satisfaction of licensed sportswear brands and sportswear or perceived value of sportswear brands. This study will investigate perceived value and brand loyalty of enthusiasts of sportswear brands among college student only. It will examine the mediating role of the self-concept. It will also investigate how these three concepts relate to each other to influence consumer consumption. The study is different because it will highlight the mediating effect of the self-concept, which is the self-image congruity on perceived value and brand loyalty.

1.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the introduction, background, research questions and objectives, methodological framework, and scope and significance of the study. The next chapter will review relevant literature to the research topic.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chapter two discusses the literature related to the research topic. As mentioned in chapter one, the main research question of this study is: *What are the perceived values of sportswear brands among college students?* In order to address this question, literature from three relevant concepts will be discussed: brand loyalty, the self-concept and perceived value. A discussion regarding sportswear consumption and college students will also be presented, as it provides context for the data collection.

This chapter begins with an overview of sportswear consumption and college students. Thereafter, the concepts of brand loyalty, self-concept, and perceived value will be discussed. Lastly, the conceptual model for this research will be presented.

2.1 Sportswear Consumption and College Students

2.1.1 Sportswear Consumption

Historically, sportswear was defined as casual wear specifically in the 1920's (Women Wear Daily, 2012). In the twentieth century when more designers began producing ready-to-wear items, sportswear began to take on another purpose. Today, sportswear has become more associated with active wear. People, however, do not only wear sportswear for sports, but wear sportswear on common, everyday occasions (Cotton Incorporated 2012: Women Wear Daily, 2012). Given this recent definition-shift, this study will adapt Ko et al.,'s (2012) definition.

Sportswear is defined as any apparel and footwear made for sports participation and may also be worn as casual clothes for daily activities (Ko et al., 2012). Since 2010, sportswear consumption has been increasing by an average of 4%, with 2013 showing an increase of 6 % (Euromonitor International, 2014). The upsurge has attracted a number of new entrants such as the casual end retailers, creating competition for the already crowded sportswear market. Under

Armour and Lululemon Athletica are some new sportswear players that have grown rapidly due to their focus on niche markets, such as performance apparel and yoga inspired sportswear (Euromonitor International (2014). According to Euromonitor International (2014), the global sportswear industry will increase and generate an additional \$55 billion in new sales by 2017. With figures such as these, companies need to strategize in order to reap benefits.

An increase in sportswear consumption could be attributed to factors such as the consumer's need for fitness, health consciousness, competition among brand the market and an increase of more sports inspired stylish designs – *athleisure* (Euromonitor International, 2014). Athletic wear has become part of the consumers lifestyle, with more than nine out of ten (approximately 93%) wearing their athletic apparel for activities other than exercising; with 85% wearing them around the house, 65% running errands in them, 42% wearing them while shopping and 20% wearing them when going out to eat (Cotton Incorporated, 2012). Therefore, sportswear apparel has become a daily part of consumers. Given this data, brands and retailers can increase sales within the market by meeting their needs through provision of high quality products.

Sportswear includes several brands, such as Nike, Puma, Reebok, Adidas, Umbro, Northface, Columbia, Lululemon Athletica, Under Armour, and Asics among others. Some brands have a larger market share than others. For example, Nike has the largest share of the sportswear brands with 4.9 % of the global market and at the same time, it had the highest retail value in the US market followed by Adidas and Under Armour with the rest sharing the remaining market retail value (Euromonitor International, 2014). Figure 2.1 shows the sportswear retail market share in the US in 2013.

Several studies on sportswear have been done, including casual sportswear of US consumers (Chi & Kilduff, 2012), brand loyalty in the UK sportswear market (Dawes, 2009), factors that create value and influence consumers purchase of university licensed and sportswear goods (Hedlund & Naylor, 2009), the values retailers look for when purchasing women's sportswear (Rogers & Lutz, 1990), and global marketing segmentation usefulness in the sportswear industry (Ko et al., 2012).

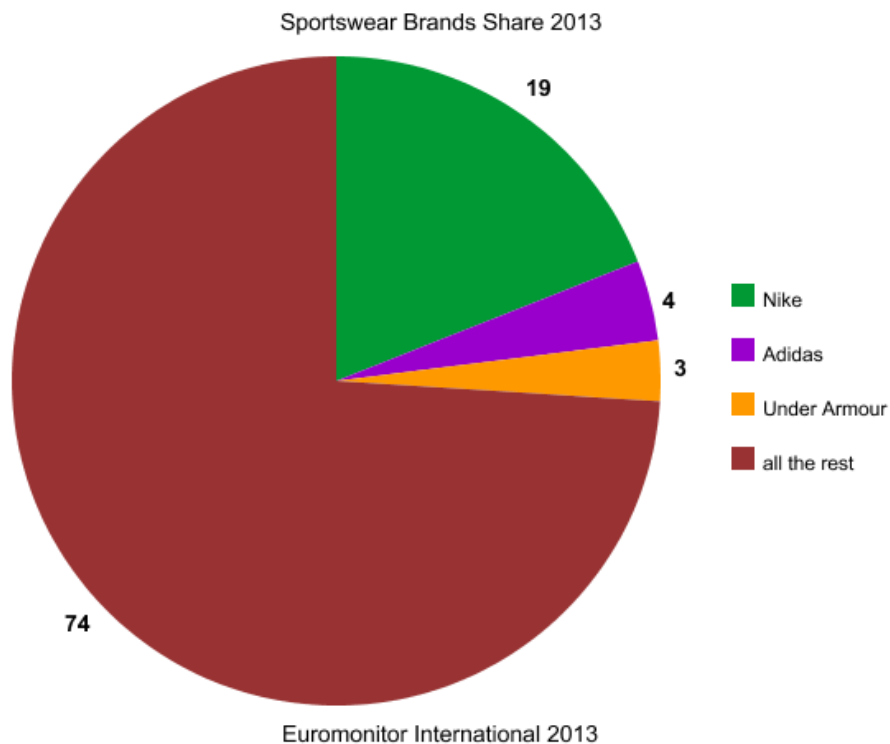


Figure 2.1 Sportswear retail market share in the US in 2013, Nike 19%, Adidas 4% Under Armour 3% and others 74% (Euromonitor International, 2014).

Research done by Dawes (2009) showed that sportswear consumption varied across the general population. The study revealed that consumers in the UK sportswear market were not loyal to a particular brand. Instead, consumers switched from one brand to another. This was influenced by factors such as income, age and family status. This study also revealed that understanding potential customer characteristics can be a strategy brand managers can use,

because different ages showed differing brand loyalty. Therefore, marketers need to have strategies to capture different consumer demographics and make them more loyal to their brands.

In an attempt to identify and retain potential customers, Ko et al., (2012) studied the importance of categorizing consumers into groups with similar characteristics. Four sets of consumers emerged based on the following features: fashion interest, brand awareness, adventure orientations, flamboyant orientation, economic orientation, leadership and social activity. From the study, four consumer sectors in the global sportswear market were identified as: fashion leaders, conspicuous fashion consumers, sensation seekers and sociable followers. Different segments occurred due to variances in demographics, purchase behavior, sportswear attributes and intention to purchase (Ko et al., 2012). Hence, marketers can identify and attract potential customers in the sportswear market by categorizing them. However, understanding the value consumers get from consuming sportswear is also important. As a result, college students would be an important group to study because of their similarities in terms of demographics and purchase behavior.

2.1.2 College Students

College students are a large viable market for retailers. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2014, 21.1 million students attended college in United States in the fall of 2014, up from 5.7 million in 2000 (NCES, 2014). The spending of college students rose to \$48.4 billion from \$45.8 billion in 2013 (National Retail Federation, 2014). College students also spend frequently on fashion clothing, shoes and gadgets, with their spending increasing towards graduation and employment (National Retail Federation, 2014). In addition, college students are a strong market because they accounted for two thirds of the nearly \$75

billion spent at the start of the 2014-2015 school year (National Retail Federation, 2014). College students are therefore, a significant target group that marketers cannot afford to ignore.

Several authors have investigated college students, for example Blankson, Paswan & Kwabenna, (2012) Kim & Kwon (2011); Ko et al. (2012); Morton (2002) and Nobel et al. (2009). Kim and Kwon (2011) studied college students to understand the relationships they form with retail brands. The study established that consumers form relationships with brands at different degrees depending on the worth they get from them. Relationships such as *best friends*, *casual buddies* and *soulmates* were identified. Best friends deeply trusted the brands and had positive feelings towards them. Casual buddies bought the brands for convenience and had a less committal relationships with the brands, while soul mates formed strong relationships that were characterized by brand loyalty. While these findings are significant showing that individuals form relationships with retail brands, it is important to also identify values students may get from sportswear brands specifically. In particular, it is important to understand what motivates them to develop such intimate relationships, especially given their strong buying power.

From a different perspective, Blankson, Paswan and Kwabenna (2012) conducted a study on college students and their use of credit cards. They identified this consumer segment to be a reliable market because they had a compulsive desire to buy and own many things. Studies have also shown that young people trust brands that give them value for their money, and are known to maintain retail patronage with such brands (Nobel et al., 2009). Moreover, students are at an age where they are constructing their identity. Sometimes this stage of psychological development is characterized by acquisition of material goods to convey who they are and their need to belong. Accordingly, at this age they will buy as many goods as they can afford. Thus,

this group of consumers provides a large market that was born in the consumption era and is likely to consume more products than any other generation (Morton, 2002; Nobel et al., 2009).

Nobel et al., (2009) in their study of understanding the purchasing pattern and consumption of college age generation Y found that college students are brand conscious, fashion conscious and brand loyal. They trust brands that give them value for their money, and maintain retail patronage with such brands by continuing to purchase several items with the same brand name. This is most likely to be as a result of the relationships they form with such brands (Kim & Kwon, 2011).

Most studies conducted on sportswear brands are mainly across the larger population (Chi, 2013; Chi & Kilduff; 2011; Dawes, 2009) however, it is important to consider college students who are a future broad market (Liu et al., 2012), and are more likely to be brand loyal, thus spending money on brands they love, trust and value. These characteristics of college students make them a viable focus for this study. Since studies have found college students to form relationships with brands (Kim & Kwon, 2011), these relationships are likely to influence their brand loyalty. Thus, understanding the concept of brand loyalty is important. The next section will discuss literature on brand loyalty.

2.2 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is one of the Aaker's (1991) categories of brand equity. In his seminal work, Aaker highlights the five assets of brand equity as: *brand loyalty*, *brand awareness*, *perceived quality*, *brand associations* and *other proprietary brand assets*. Aaker reported that firms should emphasize all the five assets in their provision of values to customers. When all the five categories of brand equity are integrated into consumer products and services, brand loyalty is enhanced. Brand loyalty is a 'deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred

product or service consistently in the future thereby causing repetitive same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences...' (Oliver, 1999; p 34). The consumer who is brand loyal does not switch brands despite external forces such as market forces. As a result, they consume it intensely and become attached to it (Liu et al., 2012).

As discussed earlier, brand loyalty can be approached from both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Zeithaml, 2000). Attitudinal loyalty involves consumers developing a sense of attachment to a product, while behavioral attachment is seen when consumers have high involvement with a brand through repeated purchasing and willingness to recommend to others (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). When consumers get what they want in a product they buy it more frequently, therefore becoming loyal to the brand. The consumer's love for the brand makes them avoid switching to other brands (Oliver, 1999). Loyal consumers help companies to reduce expenses incurred on advertising. They do this by advertising for the company through positive word of mouth. This attracts new customers, leading to high traffic and high sales for companies (Li & Green, 2011). Brand loyalty is significant for any company to have as it helps them to develop a sustainable competitive advantage over others (Khalifa, 2004).

Reichheld and Sasser (1990) as cited in Li and Green (2011) established that loyal consumers engage in certain behaviors such as: (1) they will not quit buying the product even when they think there are better alternatives elsewhere (2) they will try to buy other categories of products with similar brand name (3) they will be a positive influence and advocate of the brand to others, and (4) they will be willing to evaluate and give genuine reviews for the company to meet their requirements if possible. Yang and Peterson (2004) also noted similar results arguing

that loyal customers are dependable, forgiving companies for any faults, and share positive word of mouth about the company.

Brand loyalty is also influenced by consumers' need to belong to a social group. This need makes them form communities around products, services or brands they consume. Muniz and O'Guinn (2000) referred to this as *brand community*. These authors revealed that members in the group share similarities in the meaning they assign to the brands they consume and eventually become loyal to that brand. In a brand community, consumers engage in activities such as friendship, impression management, sharing consumption experiences and, conspicuous brand use (Schau, Muniz & Arnould, 2009). This is done as a way of engaging the social self. Accordingly, consumers form the brand community together with others in an effort to create value for the brand they love.

Dawes (2009) also conducted a study on brand loyalty in sportswear consumption. Brand loyalty, brand switching, and brand share among consumers' sportswear brands were explored. Brand loyalty was measured using the repurchasing behavior over a period of one year. Results indicated that consumers were not loyal to a particular sportswear brand; instead they had a "polygamous" brand loyalty with the sportswear brands. The customers switched brands on several occasions. It was witnessed across the general population despite difference in income levels, family size and family composition. Although the author found that some sportswear brands performed better in some social economic classes than others. Some brands were also more popular in some demographics more than others. As a result, targeting a specific consumer group like college students can be strategic for understanding values that create brand loyalty.

Several studies in brand loyalty have been done, however, little has been explored on how brand loyalty is influenced by the self-concept. Since brand loyalty can be an outcome of

consumers developing special associations between the self and the brand, this study will incorporate the mediating effect of the self-concept on brand loyalty and perceived value. The next section discusses literature on the self-concept.

2.3 Self-Concept and Self-Image Congruity

2.3.1 Self-Concept

For several years the study of the influence of the self has been the center of many studies in marketing research (Aaker, 1999; Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998; Sirgy, 1982). An individual's total sum of their thoughts, feelings and uniqueness concerning themselves make up their self-concept (Solomon, 2013). The self-concept can also be defined as the cognitive and affective understanding of who and what we are in terms of both the actual and the ideal self (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011).

Literature has identified four dimensions of the self-concept as: actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, social self-concept (how others see them) and ideal social self-concept (Sirgy 1982). But most studies have been done by operationalizing self-concept mainly as the actual self and ideal self (Malär et al., 2011). The actual self relates to who an individual thinks they really are. It is a more realistic appraisal of the qualities we do or we do not possess (Solomon, 2013), while the ideal self relates to whom the individual wishes to become. The self-theory asserts that we have different types of selves: self-esteem, actual self and ideal self. Individuals also have multiple selves as much as they have different social roles that contribute to making the self. All these selves affect the choice and meaning consumers assign to their objects of consumption (Solomon, 2013).

As consumers use products, they engage in behaviors to help construct the self, express the self and communicate meaning to others (Belk, 1988). The symbolic meaning attached to

objects help consumers to create and enhance the self and their identity (Aaker, 1997; Fournier, 1998). At the same time, consumers end up seeking similarities between their selves and the characteristics of brands they get attracted to (Aaker, 1997; Belk, 1988). Brands that give self-worth become a priority, and thus consumers will love brands that make them improve their self-esteem. Continual use of brands by consumers tends to make them, develop an emotional relationship, which leads to brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998). Usually these products are often relevant to them, and form part of their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982; Tuškej, Golob & Podnar, 2013).

Consumers buy numerous products such as clothes and electronics to communicate and present their selves. For instance, in a study of Saudi Arabian consumers, it was found that consumers use dress to bring out “diverse facets of their selves” and imaginations of their ideal and real identities (Tawfiq & Ogle, 2011 p.7). Consumers felt comfortable and secure wearing clothes which reflected their real self. To enhance their desired selves and express creativity, consumers shopped for unique clothes from boutiques. Other studies point out that those consumers who are compatible and confident with their desired self, experience satisfaction and success by avoiding undesired self (Karanika & Hogg, 2010). To augment the desired self, consumers may also use luxury brands in enhancing their self-worth (Liu, et al., 2012). Consequently, consumers manage impressions by using dress to both conceal aspects of the undesired self and show the desired selves to others. Thus, others end up using certain brands to express some characteristics of their personality (Sirgy, 1982). Generally, the self is significant during consumer consumption.

As a result of the relationship between consumers and products, consumers see images of themselves in the product. When they purchase and use the goods, they refer to them as “mine”

and use words such as “I love my dresses”. These words indicate a personal bond between the product and the person. Consequently, consumers use themselves as the objects of reference. A consumer’s attitude, intention to purchase and use a product similar to the self is the self-image congruency. It is influenced by the self-image and the symbolic meaning of the brand to the consumer (Sirgly, 1982).

From a different perspective, Piacentini and Mailer (2004) studied young people. They wanted to understand the meaning behind their consumption of clothing. The results indicated that, young people use clothes symbolically to enhance their self and communicate meaning about themselves to others. Using clothing brands for self-expression, identity and belonging was significant to these young people. Branded clothing displayed their financial status and conformity to a social group. Consumers wore clothing to give an impression of how much knowledge they had about the brand. Piacentini and Mailer (2004) established that clothing consumption is highly influenced by the self-concept of the consumer and young people use clothing brands as symbols, to feel socially acceptable, protect their ego from being overwhelmed and satisfy themselves. In the study, the results concluded that young people use clothing as symbolic meaning to boost their ideal self, actual self and social self.

2.3.2 Self-Image Congruity

Consumers often choose products that fit some aspect of the self (Aaker, 1999). The fit of an object of consumption between the actual self and or the ideal self of a consumer is Self-Image Congruency. It involves a process of “cognitive matching” between characteristics of the product and the consumer’s self-image (Claiborne & Sirgy, 1990). For example, the Self-image Congruency is comprised of an individual’s identities that can be communicated through dress and bodily aspects of appearance (Roach- Higgins & Eicher, 1992).

Some studies have examined how individuals are influenced by self-image congruity in their choice of products. For instance, Liu et al., (2012) studied the influence of self-image congruity on brand loyalty and brand attitude of luxury brands. The purpose of the study was to understand how a consumer's behavior may have been impacted by earlier perceptions. Three types of self- image congruity were examined by the authors: brand user image congruity, brand personality congruity and brand usage imagery congruity. Results disclosed that each of the self-congruity image concepts had affected the brand image of the product. Each concept influenced the consumer's decision making process in a different way. This study investigated only one dimension of self-congruity- the actual self and its impact on luxury brands, however, including the role of the ideal self can be significant in understanding consumer consumption.

A few studies have considered the role of self-image dimension of self-congruity in sportswear. For instance, Kwak and Kang (2009), studied the role of self-image on the perceived quality of sports team -licensed merchandise. They also examined the importance of the image congruence between the consumer's self-concept and the brand user. They probed the implication of self-congruence of team lovers on sports team-licensed merchandise goods. Specifically, the perceived quality dimension of perceived value was studied. It was found that self-image congruence affected the consumer decision making process. It also influenced perceived value and intention to purchase the team-licensed merchandise. The results indicated that consumers buy and use products due to their symbolic meaning derived from the self. However, the study only explored one dimension of perceived value. Thus, to understand perceived value incorporating fully the other dimensions would be important.

Liu et al. (2012) argued that self-image congruity enhanced brand loyalty for consumers who are motivated to a given social group. Motivation to a social group, makes them loyal to the

brand consumed by the group. Thus, belonging to the group enables them to protect their ego and enhance their self-image congruity. This invokes brand loyalty and so the consumer will buy the brand respectively to feel a sense of identity with the social group. But within the group, each individual has a special attachment to the brand. Park and Lee (2005) also argue that the more a brand resembles the self, the greater the relationship between the brand and the self. And that the customer-brand relationship quality significantly influences brand loyalty. Hence, the self-concept may play a major role in brand consumption.

Although previous studies have examined different constructs of the self independently, this research will include a dimension of the self-concept which is self-image congruity, because the ‘self’ dictates how consumers value and attach themselves to products that give them meaning. Therefore, considering the variable of perceived value is critical as college students may have unique values they attach to consumption of sportswear brands, which then have symbolic meaning to them. This study will go into a greater depth in gaining insights into the influence of self-image congruity on the perceived value of sportswear brands among college students. Moreover, it will assess the relationship between perceived value and brand loyalty. The next section will discuss literature on perceived value.

2.4 Perceived Value

Perceived value has been of major concern for brand managers. Analyzing perceived value is important because it will help manufacturers to predict consumer behavior and invest in products to make consumers loyal to their brands (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). In recent years, researchers have studied and confirmed the significance of perceived value in maintaining customers (Wang & Wang, 2010). Vieira (2013) argues that when firms compensate

customers' time, effort and price paid for their products, the customers become more committed to the product.

Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) claimed that the definition of perceived value is both unidimensional and multidimensional. Initial studies on perceived value viewed it as unidimensional and grouped it as perceived value, price based (Monroe, 1990) and as means to end theory (Zeithaml, 1988). Perceived value has been defined as “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). From the unidimensional perspective, perceived value can be measured by asking the consumers to assess the value they get from consumption of a product. However, the unidimensional approach gives a limited perspective of the concept of perceived value (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

Other researchers have studied perceived value from a multidimensional perspective for instance: customer value hierarchy (Woodruff, 1997); utilitarian and hedonic value (Babin & Babin, 2001); axiology or value theory (Mattsson, 1992); consumption value theory (Sheth et al., 1991) and as collective personal experience (Holbrook, 1994). From a multidimensional perspective, perceived value can be viewed as being composed of several constructs such as price, quality, benefits and sacrifices (Holbrook, 1994; 1999; Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) which influences consumer choices. Hence, perceived value is a complex concept, which can be best understood from both unidimensional and multidimensional perspectives (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

From a multidimensional perspective of perceived value, the theory of consumption values laid a foundation for many studies. This theory of consumption value was developed by Sheth et al., (1991). It assumes that consumers choose products based on a variety of values that

are important to them. In their study, five consumption values were elicited as; functional, social, emotional, conditional and epistemic. Functional value is the ability of the product to perform its stated functions in relation to its cost and length of use. Social value is the ability of a product to fulfill social needs such as the need to belong. Emotional value is the product's ability to give the consumer positive feelings towards it. Conditional value is the products ability to be an alternative in a given circumstance, while epistemic value is the characteristic of the product to satisfy the consumer's desire for knowledge. Most times, consumers may not get all the values they desire, but they will accept less of one value in order to obtain more of another value. Sheth et al. (1991) concluded that the theory of consumer choice values can be used to direct, define and clarify consumer consumption behavior.

Due to its significant impact on consumer choices, perceived value studies have been done in various industries using the consumption theory viewpoint as their basis (Chi & Kilduff, 2012; Gillarza & Gil Saura, 2006; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Wang, Lo, Chi & Yang, 2004; Wang & Wang, 2010; Yang & Peterson, 2004). Gillarza & Gil Saura (2006), also studied perceived value in the tourism industry. Value dimension, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty of university students travel behavior were investigated. The study revealed that a higher perception of value led to a higher consumer satisfaction and an intention to repurchase and recommend to others. Satisfied consumers, who got what they wanted from services provided, were willing to use the services again leading to brand loyalty.

This was statistically significant at ($p < .004$) for high self-image congruency group and ($p < .043$) for low self-image congruency group, thus H 2a was not supported. H 2b stated that 'the salience of the relationship between quality value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency'. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) wanted

to get a comprehensive understanding of perceived value, so they asked consumers to give their opinions about values they get from consuming different brands. Their study was an extension of the work of Sheth et al. (1991). From the study, values were generated and classified into social, emotional and functional. The study concluded that consumers evaluated products from a multidimensional perspective, in terms of utility, value for money, ability to enjoy and have fun, and ability of the product to give an impression to others. Four out of the six values suggested by Sheth et al. (1991) namely functional value - quality, functional value - price, emotional value; and social value were generated. Epistemic value and conditional value were not reported. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) then developed the Sweeney and Soutar (2001) PERVAL scale which measures the consumer's perceptions of the value of products and brands. The PERVAL scale helps to assess how values influence consumers buying attitude and behaviors.

Wang, Lo, Chi and Yang (2004), adapted the Sweeney and Soutar (2001) PERVAL scale, but omitted the price dimension and added non-monetary items, time, effort and energy. All the four dimensions of perceived value (functional, social, emotional, and perceived sacrifices) were found to be significant and affected customer satisfaction. Similarly, Chi and Kilduff (2012) studied perceived value of sportswear brands among the US consumers using Sweeney and Soutar (2001) PERVAL model. The model was used without omitting any of the four dimensions of perceived value - emotional, value, social value, quality value (performance) and price value (money). Unlike Wang et al., (2004), Chi and Kilduff (2012) argued that though the results indicated that all four dimensions influenced the consumers, they only accounted for 77% of the variance, but the remaining 23% may have been caused by other factors such as the epistemic and conditional values that were not measured in the study.

Chi (2013) also used the Sweeney and Soutar (2001) PERVAL Scale and investigated the role of contingency factors on perceived value of casual sportswear. The results indicated that consumers considered price value more highly than other values. One reason for this observation was the economic situation from the recession of 2010. As a result, hedonic value was less likely to be considered by the consumers in their choice of sportswear. Perceived value was influenced by age, gender, income level and retailer type but not the race of the consumer. The author concluded that perceived value should be assessed all the time, because it is an ongoing process. Besides that, perceived value fluctuates and can influence the relationship between the apparel company and the consumer if it is not monitored.

Many studies have been done on perceived value from different perspectives. Unlike other studies, this study will focus on college students who are a profitable future market. Studying perceived value is significant because perceived value is a relative and subjective evaluation that indicates an interaction between a consumer and a brand (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). In addition, perceived value is an ongoing process that needs to be evaluated to identify any gaps, and strengthen the relationship between the brand and consumer (Chi, 2013; Chi & Kilduff, 2012). From the studies above, perceived value can be seen as a subjective evaluation that is influenced by the individual's qualities and attributes which originate from the self (Solomon, 2013), thus differentiating one person from the other. Therefore, this study will contribute to the literature by identifying the relationship between the self-concept, perceived value and brand loyalty. The next section will discuss the conceptual model.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

As noted earlier, the concepts of perceived value, self-concept and brand loyalty were examined in this study. To understand the conceptual framework, some questions the study answered were: what are the perceived value of sportswear brands and how do they relate to the self-concept and brand loyalty among college students? Literature suggests that consumers develop special and unique relationships with brands that have values that meet their needs (Kim & Kwon, 2011). These relationships are due to the self-concept, which include the ideals, beliefs, attitudes and desires of the individual. Such relationships depend on the quality of the bond consumers develop with the brand. When the connection to the brand is stronger, the consumer is more likely to be loyal to it. Studies also show that perceived value influences brand loyalty (Yang & Peterson, 2004), therefore, since values are subjective, the self-concept is likely to moderate how perceived value influences brand loyalty. A proposed conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

2.6 Hypotheses

From the literature review, the following hypotheses have been developed;

H1a: Price value positively influences brand loyalty.

H1b: Quality value positively influences brand loyalty.

H1c: Emotional value positively influences brand loyalty.

H1d: Social value positively influences brand loyalty.

H2a: The salience of the relationship between price value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency.

H2b: The salience of the relationship between quality value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency.

H2c: The salience of the relationship between emotional value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency.

H2d: The salience of the relationship between social value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency.

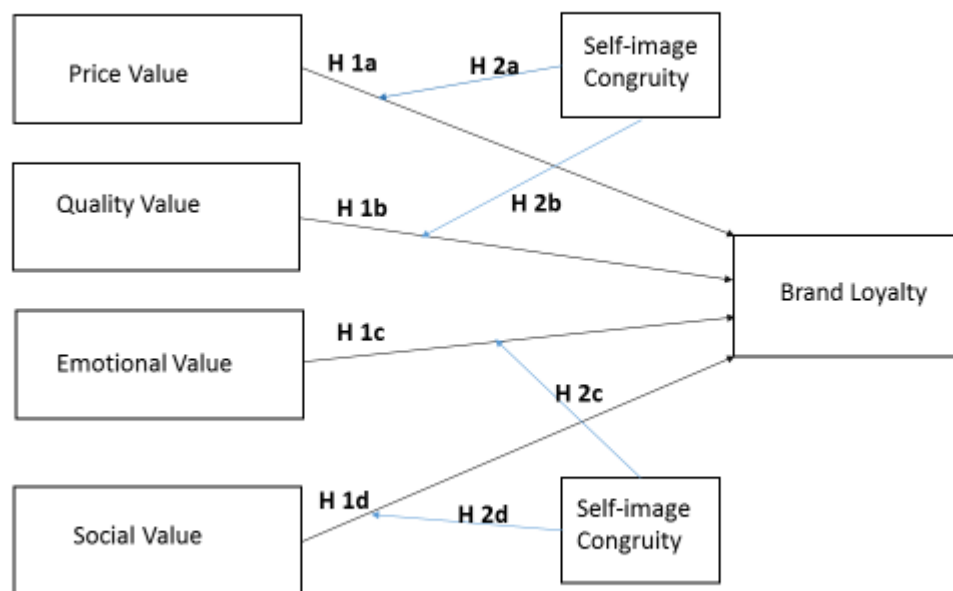


Figure 2.2 Proposed Conceptual Model.

2.7 Summary

In the literature review chapter, research concerning perceived value, self-concept, brand loyalty and sportswear consumption was reviewed. The gaps were identified and a methodological framework to guide the study was suggested. In the next chapter, the methodological framework and data collection methods will be further discussed.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter discusses how the study was executed. As stated in chapter one, the survey method was used to collect data. Methodology is discussed under five sections as: sampling, research instrument, measurement, procedure and data analysis.

3.1 Sampling

The research population were students from a university in the Southeastern United States. The students were randomly sampled from the university to form a convenience sample. After an approval from the Institutional Review Board, a survey was administered, and online invitation letters were sent to the sample population with a link to the survey through Qualtrics.

3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument used was a quantitative survey. The survey included five sections. The first had items related to favorite sportswear (e.g. sportswear items bought). The second section had items related to perceived value. Section three had items on brand loyalty, while the fourth section included items on the self-concept, which is the self-image congruity, and the last section consisted of demographic data of the respondent which included: age, sex, and race, year of study and income level.

The questionnaire had 47 items, consisting of: 9 items on sportswear consumption, 22 items on perceived value, 5 items on brand loyalty, 8 items on self-image congruity, and 6 items on demographic information. Participants were asked to respond on a 5 point Likert scale. All the responses were assessed on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. A total of 226 surveys were completed. The survey screened for those with a favorite sportswear brand. If the respondents did not have a favorite sportswear brand, they were screened out of the study. As a result, a total of 158 questionnaires were valid for data analysis.

3.3 Measurement

The questionnaire contained items of perceived value, brand loyalty and the self-concept (self-image congruity).

- Perceived value (PV). To address the objectives of this study, items from Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) PERVAL scale were used to measure perceived value. The scale was appropriate for this study because studies have shown that consumers assess products in many dimensions such as: performance, value for money, enjoyment, and social communications to others (Holbrook, 1999; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Other items were also adapted from Ko et al., (2012) and Sontag and Lee (2004). An example of an item to measure perceived value quality is: 'This product has consistent quality'.
- Brand loyalty (BL). The brand loyalty scale was adapted from Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) and Pappu, Quester & Cooksey (2005). An example of an item to measure brand loyalty is: 'I consider myself to be loyal to X'.
- Self- image Congruity scale (SIC). Self- image congruity scale had items from Sirgy et al., (1997) and Sontag and Lee (2004). An example of item to measure self-image congruity is: 'the personality of brand X is consistent with who I am (my actual self)'.

Table 3.1 below shows the construct measures.

3.4 Procedure

The study sought to identify sportswear consumption among college students, therefore a pretest was done to identify the most favorite brands among them. A Textiles, Apparel Design and Merchandising class of 50 students was selected and given the pretest. The favorite brands emerged as: Nike, Adidas, Under Armour, Lululemon, Reebok, New Balance, and Victoria Secret. The pretest was given to identify which brands to include in the study.

Table 3.1 Research Construct Measures

Construct	Adapted/Adopted From	Item
Quality Value	Sweeney, J C., & Soutar, G., N (2001)	Has consistent quality Has an acceptable standard of quality Has poor workmanship (*) Would <i>not</i> last a long time (*) Would perform consistently Is well made
Emotional Value	Sweeney, J C., & Soutar, G., N (2001)	Brand X would make me want to use it Brand X makes me feel good about myself Brand X makes me feel attractive
	Sontag, M. S., & Lee, J. (2004).	Wearing this brand makes me feel important
Price value	Sweeney, J C., & Soutar, G., N (2001).	Is reasonably priced Offers value for money Brand X is a good product for the price Brand X is worthy paying for
Social Value	Sweeney, J C., & Sweeney, G., N (2001)	Brand X improve the way I am perceived Brand X would make a good impression on other people
	Sontag, M. S., & Lee, J. (2004).	Brand X would give its owner social approval How I look in Brand X is important because I want people to accept me
Self-Image Congruence	Sirgy, M. J., Grewal, D., Mangleburg, T. F., Park, J. O., Chon, K. S., Claiborne, C. B., & Berkman, H. (1997).	The personality of brand X is consistent with who I am (my actual self)

(Table 3.1 continued)

Construct	Adapted/Adopted From	Item
Self-Image Congruence	Sirgy, M. J., Grewal, D., Mangleburg, T. F., Park, J. O., Chon, K. S., Claiborne, C. B., & Berkman, H. (1997). Sontag, M. S., & Lee, J.	The personality of brand X is a mirror image of the person I am (my actual self) The personality of brand X is consistent with how I would like to be (my ideal self) The personality of brand X is a mirror image of the person I would like to be (my ideal self)
Brand Loyalty	Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lee, S. (2000). Pappu, R., Quester, P. G., & Cooksey, R. W. (2005).	I consider myself to be loyal to Brand X When buying athletic shoes, X would be my first choice I will keep on buying X as long as it provides me satisfied products I am still willing to buy X even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors I would love to recommend X to my friends

(*) Scored reverse

3.5 Data analysis

Since this study had more than one independent variable or predictor, multiple regression was the ideal data analysis tool (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Several independent variables; price value, quality value, emotional value, social value, and self-image congruity were combined to predict the dependent variable, the brand loyalty.

According to Tabachnik & Fidell (2001) another goal of regression is to investigate the relationship between a dependent and several independent variables. This study also investigated the relationship between perceived values, self-image congruity and brand loyalty, therefore making multiple regression the most appropriate statistical tool to use. Self-image congruity also

acted as the covariate entering the equation to see whether it moderates the prediction of the dependent variable, brand loyalty.

Data analysis included profiling the respondents, assessing measurements of the research component, testing of the hypothesis and testing for the moderation effect. Descriptive data analysis methods were used for profiling the demographic data.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Participants for this study were recruited from a south eastern university in the United States. Among 226 responses, 158 were complete and included in the data. Forty six respondents were not included in the final analysis because they did not have favorite sportswear brands, and twenty four responses were not completed, making them invalid.

The sample was comprised of 64.8% females and 35.2% males. The descriptive analysis revealed that the racial composition was: Caucasian (74.8%), African American (10.4%), Hispanic (8%), Asian (4.9%), and others (1.2%). The highest number of participants were age twenty as shown in Table 4.1. Based on monthly income, the highest number of students (37.4%) fall in Gross Monthly Income (GMI) below \$500 category, whereas the least (9.2%) are in GMI \$1500- \$1999 category as shown in Table 4.2. Despite a high percentage of these participants making a gross monthly income of \$500 (approximately \$6000 per year), they spend more than \$200 on sportswear brand annually, which is about 33.3 % of their annual income. Therefore, this justifies the fact that they wear sportswear brands daily, meaning, a large number of pieces in their wardrobe is composed of sportswear brands.

The Nike brand was the most favored brand (71.8%) for this group of participants. This supported previous studies that show Nike as the most favorite brand for young people (Ko et al. 2012). The results also indicated that, New Balance and Reebok were the least favorite (0.6%). The ‘others’ category included brands such as: Task performance, Fabletics, Gap, and Asics brands which accounted for 4.3%.

Table 4.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample (Gender & Age) n = 158

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	102	64.8
	Male	56	35.2
Age	18	5	3
	19	29	18
	20	66	40
	21	28	17
	22	15	9
	23	4	2
	24	2	1
	25 and above	14	9

Table 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample (Income) n = 158

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gross Monthly Income (GMI)	\$500	61	37.4
	\$500-\$749	35	21.5
	\$750-\$999	17	10.4
	\$1000-\$1499	26	16.0
	\$1500-\$1999	15	9.2
	\$2000+	22	13.5
Annual Expenditure on sportswear	Less than \$50	10	6
	\$50- \$99.99	27	16
	\$100-\$149.99	43	26
	\$150-\$199.99	34	20
	\$200 or more	52	31

Interestingly Lululemon Athletica, a new entrant in the sportswear market had 9.9%, and was the second most favored brand. This contrasted previous studies that have shown Adidas to be second most favored brand (Tong & Hawley, 2009; Ko et al., 2012). Table 4.3 shows different brands that were favored by the participants.

The results also showed that more than half of the participants wear sportswear brands daily. Table 4.4 shows the frequency of wearing sportswear brands. Participants wear sportswear brands mainly for school and working out, with a higher percentage wearing them daily to school, justifying the fact that they spend more money on them. Table 4.4 indicates occasions when participants wear sportswear.

Table 4.3 Sportswear Brands

Sportswear Brand	Frequency	Percentage
Nike	113	71.8
Lululemon Athletica	15	9.8
Under Armour	10	6.1
Others	8	4.3
Adidas	6	3.7
Victoria secret	4	2.5
New balance	1	0.6
Reebok	1	0.6

Purchased items ranged from shorts to leggings. Shorts were bought most followed by shoes. The reason for this trend could be the fact that the participants use their sportswear daily

as indicated from the results. Thus, shorts and shoes would be more comfortable to use when walking from one class to the next. Table 4.5 shows items purchased by participants.

More than 50% of the participants in this study bought their items from specialty stores that exclusively sell sportswear only, which are expensive. This confirms previous findings by Nobel et al. (2009) that college students spend money on brands they love trust and value. Table 4.5 shows items purchased and stores where participants purchase from.

Table 4.4 Frequency and Occasion of wear

		Frequency	Percentage
Frequency of wear	Daily	86	55
	2-3 times a week	54	34
	Once a week	9	6
	2-3 times a week	6	4
	Weekend only	3	2
Occasion of wear	School	66	42
	Working out	54	34
	/Exercise	19	12
	At home /Leisure		
	Social Events(e.g.	8	5
	Socializing with		
	friends /Family)	8	5
	Sporting Events	3	2
	Other		

Table 4.5 Purchased items and Store of purchase

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percentage
Purchased items	Shorts	127	80.4
	Shoes	96	60.7
	Shirt	88	55.8
	Jacket	87	55.6
	Shirts	79	49.7
	Pants	69	43.6
	Sports Bra	69	43.6
	Leggings	67	42.9
	Skirt	5	3.1
	Vest	5	3.1
Store of purchase	Specialty store	85	54
	Department store	48	18
	Online	24	15
	Discount store	19	12
	Others	2	1

4.2 Measurement Assessment

Data for this study were analyzed following several phases. The initial phase focused on assessing scale validity and reliability. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to determine the dimensions of the constructs was conducted. To examine the EFA, the variables were assessed using Principal Component Extraction and Varimax Extraction. Any construct that had a loading of less than .600 was eliminated. The rotated component matrix showing the items and the factor loadings are presented in Table 4.6.

Reliability of the questionnaire items was calculated using Cronbach's (1951) alpha for internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.75$). A reliability of .7 and above indicated that the items had a strong reliability and were retained. Table 4.7 shows the reliability of the constructs.

Table 4.6 EFA Results for Research Constructs

Component	Item	Loading
Social Value	Brand X would give its owner social approval	.874
	Brand X would improve the way I am perceived	.872
	How I look in brand X is important because I want others to accept me	.774
	Brand X would make a good impression on other people	.763
Emotional Value	Brand X would make me feel good about myself	.861
	Brand X makes me feel attractive	.835
	Wearing this brand makes me feel important	.718
	Brand X would make me want to use it	.653
Price Value	Brand X is a good product for the price	.835
	Brand X is reasonably priced	.783
	Brand X offers value for money	.717
	Brand X has poor workmanship	.613
Quality Value	Brand X has poor workmanship	.910
	Brand X has an acceptable standards of quality	.858
Brand Loyalty	I will keep buying Brand X as long as it provides me with satisfied products I am still willing to buy	.798
	Brand X even if its price is a little higher than its competitors	.751
	I would love to recommend Brand X to my friends	.607
Self-image Congruity	The personality of brand X is a mirror image of the person I would like to be	.872
	The personality of brand X is consistent with how I would like to be	.856
	Brand X is consistent with whom I am	.826
	The personality of brand X is a mirror of me	.799
	Brand X helps me to be the person I would like to be	.781

Table 4.7 Reliability Scores of Research Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Social value	.863	4
Emotional value	.817	4
Price value	.786	4
Quality value	.905	2
Brand loyalty	.716	3
Self-image congruity	.884	5

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

4.3.1 Direct Effects Testing

Multiple regression was conducted to test the proposed hypotheses and to determine the relationship between the variables, as well as to determine the mediation effect of self-image congruity on brand loyalty. Assumptions of multiple regression (linearity, normality, collinearity, and homoscedasticity) were addressed. The results of the multiple linear regression were significant as shown in Table 4.8. It had been hypothesized that: H1a Price value positively influences brand loyalty; H1b: Quality value positively influences brand loyalty. H1c: Emotional value positively influences brand loyalty, and H1d: Social value positively influences brand loyalty. Following the results, these hypotheses were supported.

The results showed that perceived value constructs predicted brand loyalty. The overall model was significant ($F=5.342$, $R^2=.333$). As predicted, price value positively influenced brand loyalty ($\beta = .364$, $t=4.858$), thus supporting H 1a. Quality value also influenced brand loyalty positively ($\beta=.174$, $t=.1.938$) providing support for H 1b.

Table 4. 8 Results of Regression Analysis (n = 158)

Dependent variable (Brand loyalty)			
Independent variables	Standardized Regression Coefficient (beta)	t value	Significance
Price value	.364	4.858	.000
Quality value	.174	1.938	.054
Emotional value	.215	13.051	.003
Social value	.159	2.311	.022
F- value	5.342		
Adjusted R ²	.333		

H 1c suggested that emotional value would positively influence brand loyalty, the data supported this hypothesis ($\beta = .215$, $t = 13.051$). H 1d predicted that social value would positively influence brand loyalty, this hypothesis was also supported ($\beta = .159$, $t = 2.311$). This confirmed previous findings that consumers are influenced by different values in their choices of consumer products and services (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

From the results, 33% of the variance in Brand Loyalty (BL) was predicted by Quality Value (QV), Price Value (PV), Emotional Value (EV), and Social Value (SV), $F(1, 158) = 5.342$, $P < .022$ (Table 4.8). The highest variance was contributed by quality value while the lowest variance by social value. The prediction was statistically significant, $F(1, 158) = 5.34$, $P < .02$.

4.3.2 Moderating Effects

To test for the moderation effect of Self-Image Congruity (SIC) on BL and Perceived Value (QV, PV, EV, SV) constructs, first we had to cluster the groups according to their self-image congruity influences. Using the self-image congruity scores, k-means clustering analysis procedure was conducted, and two clusters emerged. Table 4.9 shows the means of the self-image congruity. Cluster 1 comprised of 62% of the total sample population, and had a higher mean on self-image congruity. This was interpreted that this participants saw their favorite brand as congruent to their self-image. Cluster 2 comprised of 38% of the sample population and had a lower mean on self-image congruity. We referred to Cluster 1 participants as those having high self-image congruity (High SIC) with their favorite sportswear brand and Cluster 2 as those having low self-image congruity (Low SIC) with their favorite sportswear brand.

Secondly, multiple regression was conducted to examine the moderating effect of self-image congruity on the relationship between perceived value constructs and brand loyalty for the group with high self-image congruity and the group with low self-image congruity (Table 4.10). Price value was significant for both groups, while quality value was significant for high self-image congruity group, and emotional value was significant for low self-image congruity group respectively. Social value was not significant in terms of affecting individuals' brand loyalty for both groups.

Moderating effect of self-image congruity on the relationship between perceived values and brand loyalty was proposed through four hypotheses. H 2a 'The salience of the relationship between price value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruity. This was statistically significant at ($p < .004$) for high self-image

congruency group and ($p < .043$) for low self-image congruency group, thus H 2a was not supported. H 2b stated that ‘the salience of the relationship between quality value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency’.

Table 4.9 Means of Self-image Congruity Constructs

Dependent variable	High SIC	Low SIC
The personality of Brand X is a mirror image of me	3.333	2.276
Brand X is consistent with who I am	3.548	2.534
Brand X helps me to be the person I would like to be	3.376	2.103
The personality of Brand X is consistent with how I would like to be	3.742	2.466
The personality of Brand X is a mirror image of the person I would like to be	3.538	2.190

Note: Mean is on Likert scale of 5

Table 4.10 Regression Results for High and Low Self-image Congruity Groups

	High SIC (β) t sig			Low SIC (β) t sig		
Dependent variable						
Social Value	.106	(1.119)	.266	.137	(1.102)	.996
Emotional Value	.131	(1.314)	.192	.245	(2.072)	.275
Price Value	.295	(2.984)	.004	.361	(2.394)	.043
Quality Value	.245	(2.341)	.022	.228	(1.491)	.142

This was statistically significant at ($p < .004$) for high self-image congruency group and ($p < .043$) for low self-image congruency group, thus H2a was not supported. The data also supported H 2b, H 2b stated that ‘the salience of the relationship between quality value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency.’ This relationship was significant at ($p < .022$) for high self-image congruency group but was not significant for low self-image congruency group ($p < .142$). H 2b was supported.

Hypothesis H 2c proposed that ‘the salience of the relationship between emotional value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency was supported. The relationship was significant for ($p < .043$) for low self-image congruency group, but it was not significant for high self-image congruency group ($p < .192$). Therefore, the salience of the effect of emotional value on brand loyalty are different across the two groups. Thus H 2c was supported. Hypothesis 2d proposed that the salience of the relationship between social value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency. The results showed that the specified relation was not significant for both groups, with high self-image congruency group ($p < .266$) and with low self-image congruency group ($p < .275$). Thus hypothesis H2d was not supported.

Interestingly, the effects of self-image congruity moderated the relationship between price value and brand loyalty for both groups. High self-image congruency group consumers are more likely to be motivated to buy the sportswear brands by quality value and price value. While low self-image congruency group are motivated to buy their favorite sportswear brand by emotional value and price value. The effects of the self-image congruity did not moderate social value and brand loyalty relationship for both the high self-image congruency and the low self-

image congruency groups. The results of the study supported six hypotheses and one hypothesis was not supported. Table 4.11 below shows a summary of the hypotheses results.

Table 4.11 Summary of Hypotheses and Results

H	Hypotheses	Results
H 1a	Price value positively influences brand loyalty	Supported
H 1b	Quality value positively influences brand loyalty	Supported
H 1c	Emotional value positively influences brand loyalty	Supported
H 1d	Social value positively influences brand loyalty	Supported
H 2a	The salience of the relationship between price value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency	Not Supported
H 2b	The salience of the relationship between quality value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency	Supported
H 2c	The salience of the relationship between emotional value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency	Supported
H 2d	The salience of the relationship between social value and brand loyalty will be different across the groups with different levels of self-image congruency	Not Supported

From the results, there is a relationship among self-image congruity (self-concept), brand loyalty and perceived value. Participants who had high self-image congruency were loyal to their favorite sportswear brand because of the quality value and price value they get from it. While participants who had a low self-image congruency were loyal because of the price value and emotional value they get from the brand. These findings confirm earlier findings which have

shown that self-image congruity affects brand loyalty both directly and indirectly (e.g., Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, & Lee, 2006; Sirgy 1985). Self-image also does affect consumer's purchase intentions (e.g. Kwak & Kang, 2009).

4.4 Summary

This chapter presents result and discussions related to the hypotheses discussed in chapter two. The next chapter will discuss conclusion, implication and recommendation.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. 1 Summary and Conclusion

This study answered the research questions: (1) what is the perceived value of sportswear brands among college students? And (2) what is the relationship between the college students' self-concept, perceived value and brand loyalty? The results of this study show that college students consider quality, price, social value and emotional value in their choice of sportswear brands. The findings also confirmed that perceived values directly influence brand loyalty. Quality value and price value had the highest variance. These results agree with previous studies that show consumers consider several factors in their choice of products, for example Sweeney and Soutar, (2001).

The results clustered the participants into two groups according to their self-image congruity as: high self-image congruity and low self-image congruity groups. The results showed that these groups considered different values that influenced their brand loyalty. The high self-image congruity group considered quality and price value, while the low self-image congruity group considered emotional value and price value. Thus, the self-image congruity influenced the relationship between: price value and brand loyalty, quality value and brand loyalty, and emotional value and brand loyalty, but not social value and brand loyalty. This results confirm other studies that have shown that the self-image congruity affects consumer consumption (e.g. Sirgy, 1982).

The findings also reveal that price value and quality value increase brand loyalty for consumers who have a high self-image congruity to the brand. Significantly, both groups consider price value as an important factor in their choice of sportswear brands. Although the results showed the moderation effect was different for each perceived value, both groups had

their brand loyalty moderated by the self, indicating that their consumption of sportswear is related to the self. This confirms studies such as Piacentini and Mailer (2004), who found that young people wear clothing symbolically to enhance the self.

Unlike previous studies, which reveal that consumers with more income are willing to purchase expensive sportswear from specialty stores (Chi, 2013), this study showed that these consumers do not have high discretionary income, but they buy their sportswear from specialty stores. It is also interesting to note that most consumers in this study chose Nike brand as their favorite sportswear brand, therefore supporting previous studies (Chi & Kilduff; 2011; Ko et al., 2012). Lululemon, a new entrant in the sportswear market, was favored by 9.9% of the participants and was the second most favorite sportswear brand among the participants. This could be an indication that this brand is providing values that motivate young people. Thus, this could be a warning for brands that have been outset in this study, to check on the values that their brand loyal consumers no longer consider to be important to them, since perceived value is a continuous process that may change due to several factors (Chi & Kilduff, 2011).

5.2 Implications

5.2.1 Theoretical implications

Perceived value constructs; quality value, price value, social value and emotional value, directly influence brand loyalty. If a product seems to give a consumer any of perceived value constructs, then the consumer will be loyal to it. Another implication is that there is a relationship between each of the perceived value qualities (price value, quality value, emotional value, social value) and brand loyalty, and self-image congruity. A high consumer self-image congruity moderates the relationship between brand loyalty and price value, and brand loyalty and quality value, while a low self-image congruity moderates the relationship between brand

loyalty and price value, and brand loyalty and emotional value. Consumers with low self-image congruity, who see themselves as not congruent with the brand characteristics, have their self-image congruity influenced by emotional and price value. The study also implies a direct relationship between social value and brand loyalty. The social value constructs is not moderated by the consumers self-image congruity. These findings support the fact that a consumer's self-image congruity influences their choice of products. This study adds literature on the relationship between self-image congruity, perceived values and sportswear consumption behaviors.

5.2.2 Managerial implications

It can be challenging to keep consumers loyal because each day there are new products and information on the market. Thus, for companies to be sustainable, they must keep up with the ever changing values of their consumers. Results indicate that self-image congruity plays a role in consumer's choice of products. Therefore, companies need to create unique and strong brands to keep customers buying. Brand managers can improve on marketing strategies by being creative and innovative to enhance the self-image congruity.

Since high percentage of this consumer group scored high on self-image congruity, this meant that they consume products that are congruent to the self in terms price value and quality value. Managers therefore need to highlight brand characteristics that appeal to consumers' self-image. Companies need to strengthen the consumer-brand relationship by coming up with marketing strategies that enhance and boost the self-concept. For example, stores should have designs and styles that are unique and suitable for this group of consumers. Since this results have confirmed earlier studies that perceived value changes with time, companies must keep checking and updating the values consumers want to get from their brands. In this way they can be sure that the consumers will be loyal to their brand.

Manufacturers need to consider quality value especially for consumers with high self-image congruity. Buying in specialty stores is an indication that they believe the quality is better in these stores. They are also willing to spend money because such stores are expensive. Quality and price becomes an important factor for this group. Considering to invest in this group is worthwhile, because once they become brand loyal, they are likely to continue purchasing the brand even after graduation and into employment.

Since a high percentage of this group buy from specialty stores, manufacturers need to increase their products in this stores. They can work together with retailers to provide advertisements or point-of-sale display images that enhance the values that enhance their self-concept. Such images enhance the self-image and therefore, can improve the relationship between perceived values and brand loyalty.

Brand managers can also identify some of the characteristics of their brands that enhance the self-image congruity for the low self-image congruity group. They need to give this participants products that increase their emotional relationship with the brand. Enhancing these characteristics will strengthen brand loyalty. They could also identify values that are related to price, emotion and quality for this group of consumers, because these values are moderated by the self-image congruity. They can do this by having advertisements that capture the emotions of the consumers. For example developing advertisement that capture the lifestyle of students while using sportswear products would be an appealing idea.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

One limitation of the study was that it was done with convenience sample of college students, therefore the results cannot be generalized. Secondly, this study only focused on self-image congruity and not on the brand image, it could have considered the brand image

characteristics that attract the self. Therefore, future research could examine how the self-image congruity and the brand image moderate the influence of perceived value on brand loyalty.

In this study it was difficult to separate the dimension of the self (ideal from actual self) by the participants. Future research can distinguish these concepts for the participants to understand the difference between them. Future research could also examine the values that students get from brands like Lululemon Athletica in particular, because the results from this study showed that the Lululemon Athletica brand is the second most favored brand after Nike. This is interesting since this brand has a high price point, as the average price of their most popular yoga pant is approximately \$89 (Lululemon.com). Another study can also investigate what qualities make students use sportswear for school and on a daily basis in comparison to other clothing.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Institutional Review Board Approval

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

LSU

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TO: Jane Opiri
Textiles Apparel Design and Merchandising

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: January 30, 2015

RE: IRB# E9154

TITLE: The Influence of Self-image Congruity on Perceived Value and Brand Loyalty Concerning Sportswear

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 1/28/2015

Approved X Disapproved _____

Approval Date: 1/28/2015 **Approval Expiration Date:** 1/27/2018

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2a,b

Signed Consent Waived?: Yes

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable): _____

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable) _____

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman *Dennis Landin*

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE:**
*All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

Appendix 2 Sportswear Survey Invitation Letter to Participant

Invitation Letter to participants

Dear Respondents,

I am a graduate student in the department of Textiles, Apparel Design and Merchandising at Louisiana State University. I am conducting research to better understand perceived value and brand loyalty concerning sportswear among college students. You are invited to participate in this study, as your input is very important to this study. It only takes about 20 minutes to complete this survey. This is an online questionnaire, so please ensure you have access to a computer with internet connection. There are no right or wrong answer to the questions. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

You are free to respond to the items at your own pace. You may stop filling out this survey at any time if you feel uncomfortable. By filling out this survey, you agree to participate in this study. This study has been approved by Louisiana State University Institution Review Board. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researchers. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject or any other concerns, you may contact Institution Review Board at (225) 578 8692, irb@lsu.edu, or www.lsu.edu/irb. In advance, thank you for your participation.

Researchers:

Jane Opiri, Graduate Student, jopiri1@tigers.lsu.edu. (225) 5782448

Dr. Delisia Matthews, Assistant Professor, dmatthews@lsu.edu (225) 5787757.

Thank you,

Jane Andayi Opiri

Appendix 3 Sportswear Survey

Sportswear is defined as any apparel and footwear made for sports participation, and may also be worn as casual clothes for daily activities.

Section 1

Do you have a favorite sportswear brand? Yes /No

If yes, what is your favorite sportswear brand? Choose one from the list below

- ☐ Nike
- ☐ Adidas
- ☐ Under Armour
- ☐ Lululemon
- ☐ Reebok
- ☐ Victoria Secret
- ☐ New Balance
- ☐ Puma
- ☐ Other (If you chose other, please indicate in the space)_____

Check the items that you have purchased from this brand (check all that apply)

- ☐ Jacket
- ☐ T-shirt
- ☐ Shirt
- ☐ Vest
- ☐ Pants
- ☐ Shorts
- ☐ Skirt

- Sports
- Bra Leggings
- Shoes

How much would you estimate that you spend on Sportswear per year?

- Less than \$50
- \$50 - \$99.99
- 100 - \$149.99
- \$150 - \$199.99
- \$200 or more

Please tell how often you wear your sportswear

- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week
- Daily
- Weekend only

Which of the occasions below would you say you predominantly wear your sportswear? Choose only one

- Sporting events Social events (e.g. socializing with friends/family)
- School Shopping
- Working out or Exercise
- At home leisure
- Other (If you chose other, Please indicate in the space) _____

Please tell me where you typically purchase your sportswear

- Discount store((e.g. Walmart, Sam's Club, TJ Maxx, Family Dollar)
- Department store(e.g. Dillard's, JC Penney, Macy's, Nordstrom, Kohl's)
- Specialty store (Stores that sell specific merchandise, e.g. Sportswear only)
- Online (e.g. Amazon)

Section 2

Thinking about your favorite sportswear brand that you identified earlier, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

Brand X is well made

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X has an acceptable standard of quality

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X has poor workmanship

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would not last a long times

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would perform consistently

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X makes me feel attractive

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would make me feel good about myself

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Wearing this brand makes me feel important

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would make me want to use it

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X is worthy paying for

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X offers value for money

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X is a good product for the price

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X is reasonably priced

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

How I look in brand X is important because I want others to accept me

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would improve the way I am perceived

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would give its owner social approval

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X would make a good impression on other people

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Section 3

I consider myself to be loyal to Brand X

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

I will keep on buying Brand X as long as it provides me satisfied

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

I am still willing to buy Brand X even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

I would love to recommend Brand X to my friends

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

When buying athletic shoes, Brand X would be my first choice

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Section 4

The personality of Brand X is consistent with how I see myself

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

The personality of Brand X is a mirror image of me

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X is consistent with who I am

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

I project the image of myself to others through Brand X

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Through this Brand I can show my values to others

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Brand X helps me to be the person I would like to be

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

The personality of Brand X is consistent with how I would like to be

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

The personality of Brand X is a mirror image of the person I would like to be

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree or disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Section 5: Demographic data

Tell me about yourself

Gender:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

Age:

- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20
- ☐ 21
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 23
- ☐ 24
- ☐ 25 and above

Year in college:

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Graduate

Major_____

Monthly gross income (including scholarships, earnings allowances)

- under \$500
- \$500-\$749
- \$750- \$999
- \$1000- \$1499
- \$1500 -\$1999
- \$2000 or more

Ethnicity:

- African American /Black
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Other (If you chose other, please indicate in the space below)_____

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

VITA

Jane Andayi Opiri is currently a graduate student at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. She received a Bachelor of Education (Home Economics) degree from Kenyatta University, Kenya. Thereafter, she taught for several years in high school. She later decided to continue with graduate studies in the department of Textiles, Apparel Design, and Merchandising at Louisiana State University. After she receives her Master of Science degree, she plans to continue with her PhD program immediately.